

GUIDE

TO

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

Vol. V.

APRIL, 1844.

No. 10.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

ON THE GREAT FREEDOM AND ENLARGEMENT OF A TRULY HOLY SOUL.

“He brought me forth into a **LARGE PLACE**,” says the Psalmist, xviii. 18; “he delivered me because he delighted in me.” It is not uncommon to hear very devoted Christians speak of being in a “large place;” of experiencing, at a particular time, a delightful freedom and enlargement of soul. And there is some reason for supposing, that every one, in the progress of his religious history, will at length find a cord broken — “the last cord that bound him,” which will be followed by a consciousness of enlarged, expansive freedom, unknown before.

Thus Madame Guyon, after having experienced severe inward trials, gives an account of her deliverance, and her subsequent state, in the following terms. “After I had come out of the trying condition I have spoken of, I found it had purified my soul, instead of blackening it, as I had feared. I possessed God after a manner so pure and so **IMMENSE**, as nothing else could equal. In regard to thoughts or desires, all was so clean, so naked, so lost in the divinity, that the soul appeared to have no selfish movement, however plausible or delicate; both the powers of the mind, and the very senses being wonderfully purified. Sometimes I was surprised to find that I was destitute, so far as I could perceive, of any intellectual action. The imagination, formerly so restless, now no more troubled me. I had no more perplexity or uneasy reflections. The will, being perfectly dead to all its own appetites, was become void of every human inclination, both natural and spiritual, and only inclined of God to whatever he pleased, and in whatever manner he pleased. This *vastitude* or *enlargedness*, which appears to be without limits, and is not bounded by any thing, increases every day; so that my soul, in

partaking of the qualities of her Spouse, seems also to partake of his *immensity*." "I believe God was pleased to bless me with this experience at the beginning of the new life, to make me comprehend, in favor of other souls, this passage of the soul into God."

We would remark here, that the enlargement of which we are speaking does not appear to be originally so much an intellectual enlargement, as a liberty and enlargement of the heart, of the affections. Whatever there is of intellectual enlargement, is founded upon an enlargement of the religious affections. The heart expanding expands the whole. The period at which we experience that special and unlimited enlargement of soul, to which we especially refer, is when we fully cease from self; in other words, when we cease from desires; that is to say, from all natural desires which remain unsanctified, and which are of course selfish desires. All such desires, as they run in a particular direction, and are restricted by their appropriate laws, necessarily impose a limit upon the soul's action. They contract the soul to the limits of mere selfish humanity, which sees but a little distance, and is shut up within the sphere of its own objects. And if we permit ourselves to be governed by such desires, as unsanctified men generally do, the soul of course is restricted and shackled by the law of their action; and although we often imagine ourselves to be possessed of great freedom at such times, yet in truth the soul cannot expand itself beyond the boundaries which they have set. Just so far as it is under the government of the natural desires, in distinction from the will of God, it feels itself to be a slave; and just so far it really is so.

We proceed to say, further, that there may be an abandonment of the self-interested and unsanctified desires in part, and this will be followed by partial emancipation and partial enlargement. But it is not till the last desire is surrendered — till the last link of the chain is broken, that the emancipation becomes perfect, and the enlargement immense. And this result connects itself with the fact, that the soul, although it may abandon and ought to abandon its own desires, cannot live without desires of some kind. In yielding therefore its own desires, which involves the yielding of its own aims and purposes, it assumes another life, "the life of God." Its desires, therefore, after the change which has been mentioned, are God's desires; its purposes God's purposes; its will God's will. Such a soul cannot remain contracted and shut up in narrow limits. He who becomes nothing by making the surrender of his own desires, and in so doing assumes, upon this basis of personal nothingness, the divine nature, necessarily experiences something of the divine enlargedness and immensity. He goes forth at once into a "large place." He can say with the Psalmist, "Thou hast broken my bonds; I will offer thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." Truly regenerated soul! in ceasing to grasp at self, he gains God. God himself is his; and all that God has is his. He looks upon the wide universe, and calls it his own; because in having nothing of his own, he has every thing which is God's.

Every thing becomes free, expansive and immense, because every thing is seen in the immensity of the divine relation. That which is smallest assumes a new importance, because God is seen to be present to it. Considered in the merely human relation, it diminishes and becomes nothing; but, considered in the divine relation, it assumes a vastness proportioned to the new aspect in which it appears. The finite is magnified by being made to take hold of the infinite. Time is merged in eternity, and thus assumes something of the expansion of eternity. And God, manifested in Christ, is the sum, the substance, and the glory of all. He who has experienced this inward enlargement, by the loss of himself in God, knows in a new sense, and after a new manner, the meaning of the Apostle, when he says to the Corinthian brethren, "Therefore let no man glory in men, for all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours, and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's."

X. Y.

The following prayer, written by Fenelon, seems to have been dictated by that state of enlarged confidence in God, which is described in the foregoing article.

"O Lord! I know not what I should ask of thee. Thou only knowest what I want; and thou lovest me, if I am thy friend, better than I can love myself. O Lord! Give to me, thy child, what is proper, whatsoever it may be. I dare not ask either crosses or comforts. I only present myself before thee. I open my heart to thee. Behold my wants, which I am ignorant of; but do thou behold, and do according to thy mercy. Smite or heal! Depress me or raise me up! I adore all thy purposes without knowing them. I am silent. I offer myself in sacrifice. I abandon myself to thee. I have no more any desire but to accomplish thy will. Lord, teach me to pray. I pray thee, dwell thou thyself in me by thy Holy Spirit!"

God's special presence with us here in this wilderness, by his spirit and grace to direct, defend and comfort us, is the surest pledge of his special love to us, and will redound to his glory as well as our benefit.

The public concerns of God's glory ought to lie nearer our hearts than any private affections of our own.

Those that are bound for heaven must be willing to swim against the stream.

Modesty and humility make up the brightest crown of great performances.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

A SERMON,

BY REV. WM. H. RICHARDS.

1 John, ii. 6: "*He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*"

The phrase "to be in Christ" means generally in the New Testament, to be virtually united to him by faith and love. "To abide in him" is to continue in that union. "To say that we abide in him" is to profess by word or action to enjoy that union. "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." All who profess to have fellowship with the Savior are bound by that profession to exhibit his spirit and imitate his example, or else their profession is vain and useless. We shall endeavor to illustrate and enforce the following proposition — ALL PROFESSED CHRISTIANS ARE BOUND TO IMITATE THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST. Let us inquire,

IN WHAT RESPECTS THIS MUST BE DONE; and

FOR WHAT REASONS IT MUST BE DONE.

I. IN WHAT RESPECTS MUST THIS BE DONE? We are not bound to imitate the Savior in his incommunicable attributes as a divine person; such as his self-existence, eternity, independency, unchangeableness, and almightiness. But we are bound to imitate him in his moral attributes of wisdom, justice, holiness, truth, and goodness, as far as we are capable of it. Nor are we bound to imitate him in all things as a mediator. He spoke in his own name and by his own authority; this we must not do. He wrought great miracles; this we cannot do. He suffered and died to atone for the sins of men; this we are not required to do. Nor are we bound to imitate him in every action of his life as a man. He was made under the ritual law, and observed its ceremonies. He lived a single life. He fasted forty days and forty nights. These things are not required of us. We are bound to follow him only so far as he exhibited those great principles of the moral law which are applicable to every human being. Nor must we expect to be as perfect as men in this world as he was. His soul and body were perfect. His mental and moral perceptions, judgments and feelings, were correct on all subjects. We have distempered bodies and disordered souls. Hence we are liable to error, mistake, and sin, as long as we live. We shall therefore never be so perfect in this world as not to need the atonement to cover our sins of ignorance, error, and

infirmity. *In what respects, then, must we imitate the Savior, or strive to do so?* In his purity, his piety towards God, and his conduct towards men.

1. *In his purity.* "He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." "In him was no sin, neither was guilt found in his mouth." He could ask his worst enemies, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" No vain thought, irregular desire, or improper temper, ever ruffled his breast. No unholy or unkind look ever shot from his eye or disfigured his countenance. No vain, idle, or sinful word ever dropped from his lips. He always spoke the truth in love. No unholy, unrighteous, unfaithful, or unkind action, ever stained his life. His heart was as pure as the bosom of God, and his path as unsullied as the light. Perfect innocence crowned his whole life. It is thus that his disciples must aim to walk. No known or wilful sin must ever stain their life; no sinful and vagrant thoughts, imaginations, desires, or affections, must lodge in their breast and pollute it. "They must be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, amidst a crooked and perverse generation."

2. *In his piety towards God; in his trust in him.* The prophet represents him as saying, "Thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb." Amidst all his duties, difficulties and sufferings, his confidence was unshaken in the goodness and faithfulness of his heavenly Father, and in his wise and gracious providence. His followers ought to exercise the same unwavering trust in God amidst all the cares, trials and sufferings of life. "Trust in the Lord Jehovah, for in the Lord is everlasting strength. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee."

In his love towards God. His love to God was ardent, vigorous, supreme. It burned with intense glow and with constant lustre in his heart. It shined conspicuously in his life. It was the ruling principle, the main-spring of all his actions. He greatly delighted in the divine character and in the divine works. They were the constant subjects of his contemplations. His language was, "But that the world may know that I love the Father, as the Father gave me commandment, so I do." "I seek not my own glory, but I honor my Father." "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." From these expressions it is evident that he was wholly intent on the divine glory. It was his constant study, business, and delight to do the will of God, and to promote his interests in the world. It is thus that his followers ought to walk. This duty is enjoined upon them.

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." These expressions denote the extent of our obligations, as including all our mental and moral faculties. We must love God with every faculty that we possess, and with the utmost strength of it. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." This by no means conflicts with our regard to our true interest; it promotes it. Our Savior himself, "for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame" attending it.

In his humility. This was profound and wonderful. "He was meek and lowly in heart." We shall not at present speak of his infinite condescension in assuming our nature, and in suffering and dying for us; but of his humble deportment as the Son of man. His employment, (for he doubtless worked at the carpenter's trade,) the disciples that he chose, and his circumstances in life, all proclaimed him meek and lowly. Though he had no sins and imperfections, for which the best men may well be humbled in the dust, yet he had such impressive views of the divine perfections, that he appeared as nothing in his own eyes. He ascribed all his goodness as a creature to God. He assumed no high titles and prerogatives as a man. He would not gratify the sinful curiosity of the Jews with a sign from heaven; nor work a miracle to please his kindred or to increase his own fame. When his benevolence prompted him to work miracles for the relief of the distressed, he wished them concealed as much as possible. He was never vain and ostentatious. "He did not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets." He always withdrew from the multitude when they would have taken him by force and made him king. He associated with the poor and preached the gospel to them. He invariably reprov'd his disciples when they contended for superiority among themselves. "He that will be greatest among you, let him be the servant of all; for the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," &c. He gave them also an impressive example of humility by washing their feet; thus teaching them not to feel above performing the meanest offices of kindness. His disciples therefore must be humble. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Jesus Christ. "Be ye clothed with humility." "The Lord resisteth the proud, but he giveth grace to the humble." No grace is more suitable to our character and condition; none a greater ornament to us; none more pleasing to God.

In his self-denial. This was remarkable. It was seen in his

voluntary poverty. "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head." This was not a matter of constraint with him, but of choice. He could have wrought such miracles as would have raised him above want, or made him the richest being on earth—but he did not. While he wrought stupendous ones to feed others, he often suffered hunger rather than work one to feed himself. And though he had no irregular appetite to chasten, yet he often fasted. He studiously rejected all needless, worldly fame. He would not be publicly proclaimed as the Messiah, until his time was come. After some of his disciples had witnessed his glorious transfiguration on the mount, he enjoined them to tell no man of it, until he was raised from the dead. His disciples must follow his footsteps. "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up the cross," &c. We must deny ourselves of every needless self-indulgence, of every thing that does not tend to the knowledge, love, and enjoyment of God.

In his devotional spirit. He always referred the beauties and bounties of nature to the benevolence and providence of God. (See Matt. vi. 25–30.) He made natural things the emblems of spiritual things. All nature was to him full of God and vocal with his praise. The Christian also ought to see God in all things, in all places, and at all times; commune with him in his works, and rise through nature up to nature's God.

He often retired for private devotion. It is repeatedly said, "That he went up into a mountain apart to pray." Sometimes he continued all night in prayer. If the Savior, who was perfect in every respect, needed secret prayer, and frequently availed himself of it, how much more do we, imperfect and sinful creatures, need it? and how gladly should we avail ourselves of it? This duty he positively enjoins. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet," &c. Every Christian, therefore, ought to be found much alone with God. He ought to be regular and frequent in his secret devotions. What is done without any fixed rule is done feebly; and what is done but seldom is done with reluctance. He must therefore have a place and a time for prayer. System creates habit; and habit makes it easy, natural, and delightful. Regularity is indispensable to spirituality, freedom and comfort in the exercise. He habitually gave thanks to God for spiritual and temporal blessings. "I thank thee, holy Father, Lord of heaven and earth," &c. "And he took the bread, and when he had given thanks, he brake it," &c. This is too much neglected. Our wants and distresses often drive us

to prayer, while our mercies are forgotten. But we are commanded, "In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

He punctually regarded all divine ordinances. He studied the Scriptures with great care, punctuality and diligence. This is evident from his familiarity with them, and his frequent quotations of them. He kept holy the Sabbath day, and frequented the house of God. "And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." The words "as his custom was," show that it was his constant practice or habit to do so. His love for the house of God was intense and vehement in the highest degree. "The zeal of thy house has consumed me, or eaten me up." No Christian will disregard and neglect what the Savior esteemed and practised. He that does it, does it at his peril.

In his submission to the will of God in all things. It was profound and unreserved. He suffered much in his body, in his soul, and in his character, or reputation. He suffered in body from hunger, thirst and weariness. He was scourged and buffeted; a crown of thorns was put on his head; he carried the cross on his bruised and mangled back; he was nailed to it, and hung suspended upon it between heaven and earth, bearing the whole weight of his body on his hands and feet. He suffered a most lingering and painful death; but he never mourned nor complained. Never was a more patient or submissive sufferer. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." When he could without neglecting duty, he prudently shunned suffering; at other times "he endured the cross, despising the shame." He suffered much in mind from the base conduct of his disciples — from the sins of the wicked — from the buffetings of the devil — and especially from the Father's hiding his face from him. But how did he bear all this? During that hour of the power of darkness, "his bloody sweat, and his last mysterious agony," the language of his inmost soul was, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me, nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." His own will was entirely swallowed up in the will of God. He suffered much in reputation from the slanders, revilings, and false accusations of his enemies. They called him "a gluttonous man, a wine-bibber, and a friend of publicans and sinners." They accused him "of being mad, of having a devil, and of being a traitor and a blasphemer." Nothing was more false. "But when he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him

that judgeth righteously." It is thus that his followers must conduct themselves. They must bear with meekness and patience, with resignation and submission to the will of God, all that he may appoint or permit to come upon them in his wise and good providence. They must not "render evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise, blessing."

3. *In his conduct towards men.* He was just, true, faithful and kind in all his dealings with men. View his conduct towards his mother and his reputed father. It is said that "he was subject to them." He revered, loved and obeyed them. He obliged his mother by turning water into wine at the marriage in Cana of Galilee. He severely rebuked the Pharisees for breaking the fifth commandment, by neglecting their parents, under the pretence of piety towards God, see Matt. xv. 3-9. When in the agonies of death on the cross, he kindly remembered his mother, and commended her to the affectionate care of his beloved disciple John. "When Jesus therefore saw his mother and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her into his own house." How inimitably simple, beautiful and touching is this account! What an impressive and affecting example of filial love! Every Christian is bound, by every possible tie and motive, "to honor his father and mother — that it may be well with him on the earth."

Towards his disciples. He chose them from the world, and made them his counsellors and his intimate friends. He allowed them the nearest access to his person, and the greatest familiarity with himself. He unbosomed to them his whole heart. "Henceforth I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you." He loved them as his brethren; yea, he loved them more than he did any mere earthly relations. "And he stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren, for whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." Hence his forbearance with the dulness of their understanding, their unbelief, and their contentions among themselves. Hence he often instructed them in secret, in the things that he had spoken in public. Hence the instructions, the reproofs, the warnings, and the encouragements that he gave them. Hence the care and the solicitude that he evinced for them, when he was taken by his enemies in the garden. "If ye seek me, let these go

away." "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end." His love however was wise and discriminating. He loved those of them the most who were most like himself in spirit, temper, taste and habit. John is called "The disciple whom Jesus loved." His followers must love one another as brethren, "and with a pure heart fervently." This is one proof of discipleship. "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." We must love all in whom we see the image of the Savior. Not one of them must be excluded from our kind affections and offices. We must love them with a love that is stronger than death, if we would imitate his love for them. We must however love those the most, in whom we see most of the image of Christ.

Towards his enemies. The Savior loved them with a love of pity; he earnestly desired their welfare, and he labored and prayed for their salvation. *Hence* he instructed them in the things that belonged to their peace — reproved them for their sins; and kindly warned them of their danger. *Hence* the deep interest and anxiety that he evinced at all times for their eternal happiness, and his scalding tears and bitter lamentation over Jerusalem. *Hence* his kind and forgiving spirit towards them, and his earnest prayer for his murderers, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." *Hence* his sufferings and death for their salvation. His followers must do as he did. "I say unto you, Love your enemies — bless them that curse you — do good to them that hate you — and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." A hard lesson this for human nature to learn! Our hearts must be filled with the love of Christ before we can do it. This alone can make this difficult duty easy to us, by making the performance of it the spontaneous exercise of the heart.

Towards all men. He gave to all "their dues, tribute to whom tribute was due — custom to whom custom — fear to whom fear — and honor to whom honor" — justice, courtesy and kindness to all. "He loved his neighbor as himself." His whole life was that of matchless goodness. He was love embodied, moving, acting, and pouring out its treasures to the human race. "He went about doing good" to the bodies and souls of men. His every act was pure blessing. With untiring diligence he fed the hungry — healed the sick — and raised the dead. "He

was eyes to the blind — feet to the lame — and a father to the poor. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon him, and he caused the widow's heart to sing for joy." "He did all things well." He preached the Gospel to the poor — instructed the ignorant — warned the careless — encouraged the weak — confirmed the wavering — comforted the afflicted — and established the good, giving every one his portion in due season.

His benevolence was universal. He never refused to listen to a tale of woe, and to relieve the distressed. He loved every soul of man. "He tasted death for every man." Not one was excluded from his compassion. His disciples also must deal justly, truly and kindly with all men. Their benevolence must be sincere, constant and universal. Our religion must be the same in nature with the Savior's; though we can never expect to carry it to the same degree of perfection that he did. It must be our constant study, effort and aim, to be as much like him as possible. Such is a very imperfect outline of the manner in which we are to follow Christ. Let us observe,

II. FOR WHAT REASONS MUST THIS BE DONE? "He that saith he abideth in him, *ought* himself also so to walk, even as he walked." The word *ought* implies obligation or duty: and duty implies ability, natural or supernatural, to perform it. We do not believe that man has sufficient natural ability to imitate the Savior as above described. True he possesses all the natural faculties that he ever possessed: but they are essentially disordered and debilitated by sin. Hence our absolute need of divine grace, to enlighten, assist, and renew us in the image of God. "Without Christ we can do nothing;" "but through Christ strengthening us, we can do all things." Through the grace of God we can do all that he requires of us in order to be saved. The apostle therefore does not speak in the text of any thing impracticable, or impossible. He speaks of himself and others as having already attained this state. "For as he is, so are we in this world." We are, in our measure, pure, just, true and benevolent, as he is in his. That we are in duty and interest bound to imitate the Savior, is evident from the following considerations.

1. *From the divine commands.* "As he that hath called you is holy, so be ye also holy in all manner of conversation." The Savior's language to his disciples is, "Follow me." This, doubtless, implies full consecration to the service of God; entire separation from sin; and the practice of all righteousness, goodness and truth. These commands are supremely binding on the heart and conscience. We can have no reasonable excuse for disobedience, for divine grace is proffered to us to help in time of need. We disobey therefore at our peril.

2. *From the design of the Savior's life.* He lived on the earth, "leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps." He is our great model. Our characters must be formed after his. He did not come into this world to abrogate the moral law. He enforced its claims; explained its spirituality; and obeyed it. He embodied and exemplified in his life all the great principles of it. Here we see them living and moving before us — learn their practicability — and are excited to desire, emulation and hope. The heathen considered it the height of perfection and happiness to be like their gods. The believer ought to consider it his highest dignity, happiness and glory to be like Christ. To be like him is to be like God, for he is the image of the invisible God.

3. *From the provisions of the Gospel.* The Savior has provided not only for our perfect pardon, but also for our entire renovation. His great design in coming into the world, was to save his people from their sins, and perfect them in holiness: or, in other words, to make them like himself. "Who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." He gave himself for the church, "that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word — that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." It is his great aim to assimilate us to his own image — "created after him in righteousness and true holiness." It is for this purpose that he gives us his word, his spirit and his servants. This is the crowning blessing of the gospel dispensation, and the glory of the church of Christ.

4. *From our profession.* We bear the name of Christ, and are called Christians. To be true Christians, is to be like Christ in spirit and life. We are no farther Christians, than we profess his spirit and follow his example. That order appears the most natural. "If any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "And he that taketh not his cross and followeth me, is not worthy of me." It is therefore utterly inconsistent with our profession to live in known, wilful and habitual sin. It is base, sinful and hypocritical to do so. They who are guilty of it, greatly dishonor the worthy name by which they are called, and bring a reproach on the cause of God. They make a wrong impression of the character of Christ, and his religion upon the world. Again. When we made a public profession of religion, we solemnly promised, in the presence of men, angels and God, that we would, God being our helper, imitate the Savior by forsaking every sin, and by keeping the commandments of God all the days of

our life. Those solemn vows are upon us. They are written against our names in heaven. They are before God, and will never be forgotten by him. Do what we may, we have spoken to God, and cannot recall it. We can never change or shift off our responsibility. We have given ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant, never to be forgotten.

5. *From its being necessary to our continuance in union with the Savior.* It is the best evidence we can give that we abide in Christ. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." "We are joined to the Lord in one spirit." We cannot therefore maintain that union, unless we cherish and exhibit his spirit. Our Savior makes this evident in the following words: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away," &c., see John xv. 1-6. Here our fruitfulness is made not only the evidence of our union with Christ, but also the condition of its continuance." Again, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love." John says, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not the truth." Here we are taught that it is perfectly incompatible to have fellowship with God, and live in sin at one and the same time. Obedience is the only way to obtain communion with God. We must persevere in holiness, if we would continue in the favor of God.

6. *From its happy influence upon ourselves and others.* Were every individual like Christ, how much more happy would he be! He would be entirely delivered from the stings of conscience — the pangs of guilty fear — the torment of sinful passions — and the disquietude of anxious, worldly cares. Religion would be to him the balm of life — the multiplier of his joys — and the earnest of heaven. Were all men like Christ, sin and woe would be banished from our earth. All would be united to the throne of God, and to each other in the sweetest bonds of love and peace. The golden age of poetry would be more than realized, and earth would become a second paradise. We may well, therefore, breathe out our desires in the language of the poet,

"O long expected day begin,
Dawn on these realms of woe and sin."

7. *From its being necessary to qualify us for heaven.* Heaven is a holy place, and is promised only to holy persons. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall

my servant be." All the saints in heaven will be like the Savior in soul and body. This will be the consummation of their bliss and glory. "It is enough that the servant shall be as his Lord!" Now this likeness, as it regards the soul, must be obtained in this world. If it is not obtained here, it can never be obtained. The present state only is that of trial — the future that of retribution. Settle it therefore in your mind, that if you would guard against backsliding, grow in grace, "and be like Christ, and see him as he is" in heaven, you must make it your constant study and aim to follow him. "For every one that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure." Nor ought we to confine this great work to our last sickness, or the hour of death. We might mention some other considerations to enforce this duty; such as that the performance of it would greatly promote our usefulness, the glory of God, and our eternal blessedness. We will now close this subject with a few practical reflections.

From it we learn, 1. *The vast superiority of the Christian religion over every other.* It is superior to every other in the strength of its evidences — the glory of its doctrines — the purity of its morals — and its adaptation to the wants of men. Let us dwell a moment on the last consideration — its adaptation to the wants of men. This is seen in two things. It presents before us a *perfect example*, and it provides for our *entire renovation*. *It presents before us a perfect example.* This is of immense importance in religion. Man is in a great degree the creature of imitation. Almost his whole character is formed by it. He learns much better from example than from precept. It is therefore indispensable that he should have a perfect model or standard of character, in order to be pure. His model must be something tangible, or, in other words, must be in human nature, on this earth, amidst all the diversified circumstances of our being. We look in vain for such a model in all the annals of heathenism or of infidelity. Many of the heathen sages gave good precepts, though by no means perfect; but which of them kept his own precepts, or was made holy by them? Their very gods, the standards of perfection among them, were vile and corrupt. Their worship assimilated them to their likeness. It could not therefore be expected, that the people would be better than their gods. This made the wisest among them earnestly desire a divine teacher. Christianity supplies this deficiency. Here is presented to us a perfect example, in our own nature, living among us under all the diversified circumstances of humanity — the matchless example of Christ. We can challenge our worst enemies on this subject — they are speechless. Our religion therefore promotes the perfection of

man. Let us make the Savior our model, and we shall be assimilated into his likeness, which is contained "in righteousness and true holiness." *It provides also for our entire renovation.* Many systems of religion give good precepts: but they give no heart, no power to keep them. They have no sanctifying power in them; they cannot overcome man's love of sin. The Christian religion has heat as well as light in it — has divine power as well as divine precepts and examples. It illumines, it attracts, it renews the soul. It destroys our love of sin, and our enmity to holiness; it elevates the soul above low and grovelling objects and pursuits; and it creates a state of mind correspondent with its duties, exercises and enjoyments. It infuses its own celestial and divine spirit into its possessors. Let infidels blush, therefore, to ask us to give up our religion, until they can find us a better one. We learn, 2. *The great deficiencies of most professed Christians.* "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." Believers are the Savior's representatives on earth. But how faintly do many of them reflect his image on the world! How unlike him are they in spirit and conduct! How vastly they fall short of the example that he gave them! It ought not to be so — it need not be so. It is their own fault. They are not straitened in the Savior. He has provided for them a full salvation. It is freely offered to them in the gospel. They are straitened therefore in their own hearts, by their unbelief, negligence and unfaithfulness. Their past sins may well grieve and humble them. Every new discovery of the Savior ought to produce this effect upon them. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. We learn, 3. *How greatly we need the atoning merits of the Redeemer.* In view of past sins and present imperfections, whither should we go for pardon, purification and relief, were it not for the blood of Christ? Many a sincere but imperfect Christian would be driven to despondency; and the most perfect could never bear the rigor of the divine law. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." Every Christian feels —

"Every moment, Lord, I need
The merits of thy death."

But he will never make that a plea for neglecting duty, or committing known sin. That would be "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness." We learn, 4. *If we would be like Christ, it*

will cost us constant attention, exertion and diligence. We must study his character as delineated by the sacred writers, until we become conversant, as it were, with every feature of it. We must make it the subject of our frequent contemplations. We must apply to God by believing prayer, for the transforming influences of the Holy Spirit to destroy our sins, and to mould and fashion us according to the glorious image of the Redeemer. While we use these means, a transforming process will be constantly going on in our character, until the divine image is fully impressed upon us. "But we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, *even as by the spirit of the Lord.*" *Finally, brethren, would we be happy in God* here, be eminently useful in our families, the church and the world, glorify God in the most signal manner, die without a lingering regret, be welcomed to paradise by many happy spirits brought there through our instrumentality, have a glorious and triumphant resurrection in the last day, and live very near the eternal throne for ever, let us follow the Savior fully. This is our glory and joy.

For the Guide to Christian Perfection.

SHORT RELIGIOUS SAYINGS OR MAXIMS,

From a work devoted to the subject of Personal Holiness, written about 300 years since, and now very scarce, entitled, Desiderius; or, the Original Pilgrim, a Divine Dialogue, showing the most compendious way to arrive at the Love of God.

I.

For the love of Jesus Christ, who died for thee, renounce all sensual pleasures; and when thou wouldst see, hear, smell, taste, touch, or say any thing, remember thou art to obey God and reason, and suffer not thyself to be tempted to irregularity. Conform thy desires to God's will and direction; and in all thy enjoyments avoid voluptuousness and excess.

II.

Keep a strict guard over thy tongue, thine ear and thine eye, lest they betray thee to things vain and unlawful. Be sparing of thy words, and talk not impertinently or in passion. Keep all parts of thy body in a just decorum, and avoid immoderate laughter and levity of behavior.

III.

Be fond of no creature, but mortify thyself to the world; so wilt thou keep thy mind at *liberty*, in which the true pleasure of life consists.

IV.

By an entire resignation and denying of thyself, thou wilt be able to restrain irregular affections and passions. Make God the object of thy love and desire, and give up *thyself wholly to him*. Let his will be thine, and pursue his praise and honor more than thy own profit.

V.

Observe the providence of God in all things, and put thy trust in him who will not fail to take care of thee in all adversity, whether internal or external. Submit to the hand that afflicts thee, and assure thyself it is for thy good. Bear thy condition with patience and equanimity, be it ever so unhappy, giving thanks to God for his all wise dispensations. Be not offended or affronted at injuries, nor impatiently complain of men. But reflect on thy own unworthiness, who deservest to be ill treated by all. Depend upon God, and *in holy silence preserve thy peace of mind*. Consider with what patience thy innocent Savior suffered the indignities of men, and thou wilt be prepared to bear the utmost contempt of thine enemies.

VI.

Think meanly of thyself, considering thy own vileness, who art but dust and ashes, and hast nothing thou canst call thy own. The better thou thinkest of thyself, the worse God will think of thee; and in seeking applause for a good work, thou wilt lose thy reward. Whatsoever of good there is in thee, look upon it as God's, and not thine own; and usurp not that to thyself which belongs to him. Please not thyself to displease God; and esteem thyself unworthy of the least of his gifts.

VII.

Deny thyself to oblige others in all things lawful. Let thy obedience be ready and cheerful, which is acceptable to God; and consider how he curseth the rebellious and undutiful.

VIII.

In imitation of thy blessed Savior, be content with a little. Shun excess in apparel, and luxury in diet; and think how ungrateful thou would'st be to murmur at coarse diet, when Christ, for thy sake, drank vinegar and gall. If thou wantest common necessities, still thank God it is no worse, and trust in him who will never forsake his servants; though for a while, and for their own good, he may sometimes suffer them to be afflicted.

IX.

Love all people as thine own brothers and sisters. Pray for the salvation of all. Speak kindly to and look pleasantly on all, especially thine enemies and persecutors, and let universal charity extinguish all bitterness of spirit in thee. Assist and comfort the distressed, especially if they have offended thee. Rejoice at the prosperity and good deeds of others, as if they were thine own, and deplore their calamities as if they had befallen thee.

X.

Despise no body. *Avoid rash judgment and uncharitable censures. Think well of all men, and interpret their words and actions to the best meaning. Prefer all men in thine own thoughts before thyself; and look upon thyself as a most vile and unworthy creature. If thou wert wise, how cheerfully wouldst thou obey God, and readily be serviceable in thy generation! Wouldst thou imitate thy Lord and Master? Consider he took upon him the character of a servant, and condescended to wash the disciples' feet.*

XI.

Study to please God more than man, and rather desire contempt than applause.

XII.

Indulge chaste and pious thought, considering that God is every where present. converse frequently with him in thy mind, and endeavor to preserve his memory in thy thoughts, that thou may'st never be absent from him.

XIII.

Whatsoever relates not to God, is not worth thy care. This will wean thee from the world, and set thy mind at liberty only to serve him; which is the only thing necessary, and for the obtaining of which thou canst not spend too much time or pains. Be cautious, and presume not upon thine own performances; but rely wholly upon God's goodness and mercy, by whose help only thou art able to do thy duty.

Modesty is the hedge of chastity, and therefore ought to be very carefully preserved and kept up by both sexes.

He is indeed a rich man in whom the word of God dwells richly.

If God were not more mindful of his promises than we are of his precepts, we were undone.

THE following article from the Advocate of Moral Reform, though not on the subject of Christian Holiness, seems, in the management of this mother, so much like the fruit of it, that we expect our readers will thank us for inserting it in the Guide.

“SORROWING YET REJOICING.”

“Millions of infant souls compose
The family above.”

HAVING been called, in the providence of God, to part with a beloved child the past week, I write, at the request of a friend, some account of his short life and sudden death.

William Zina Hubbard was born December 17, 1840. At his birth he was solemnly consecrated, by believing parents, to the service of the Lord. At the same time they solemnly covenanted to desire no worldly honors or distinctions for their dear child, if the Lord would only give them evidence that he was sanctified in early life. For this they labored and prayed daily, resting on the promise, that whatsoever things ye ask *believing*, ye shall receive — they took hold of this promise and would not let it go. To this end we embraced the earliest and most favorable opportunities of impressing upon his mind important truths, such as — God^s is love — that he must be pure in heart — and illustrated them in various ways adapted to his capacity.

One little incident occurs to me, that I will mention to show the manner in which we endeavored to fasten truth upon his infant mind. We were spending a few weeks in the country the past summer, and as I was returning with him one night across the fields, I stopped and directed his attention to the beautiful clouds; the sun just sinking below the horizon, threw over them a soft, mellow lustre. His attention was riveted. I asked, “Who made those beautiful clouds?” “God,” he said, in a tone of deep feeling. “Do you love to look at them?” “Yes, mamma.” “God is more beautiful than the clouds, and his home is beyond them; would you like to see God?” “Yes.” Well, by and by, if my Willy is pure in heart, he shall see God.” “Was not God very good to give us such a beautiful world, those bright clouds above us, and these sweet fields around us?” “Yes, mamma.” “How much should we love God?” “With all our hearts.” It was an interesting season to his mother. The time, the place, the unusually contemplative state of his mind, all aided in setting home the lesson. I realized the exalted character of my commission as a mother, and felt that I could bring this precious lamb, and lay it at the Savior’s feet.

We were accustomed, long before he could speak, to take him with us in our private seasons of devotion, and in imitation of this practice he has often been seen to go with his little sister into a remote corner of the room, and kneel down, and clasp his little hands to pray, before he could articulate a syllable; and at such times my heart has overflowed with a desire that he might be early gathered into the fold of Christ. As soon as he could pronounce words in his infantile way, I commenced teaching him to pray. These seasons of instruction are among my most precious recollections. I shall never forget one petition in his last prayer, a few hours before the accident occurred which caused his death. "Dear Savior, take me to heaven when I die, and give me a golden harp." How little did we think, that before that time the next morning, his prayer would be granted! He would frequently pray without any dictation from me, and my heart has often been melted to tenderness, to hear that lisping babe ask God to bless his dear mamma. He would sometimes, after rising from his knees, think of some one for whom he had forgotten to pray. Then he would immediately kneel down and present his child-like petition in their behalf. On one occasion he said he had forgotten to pray for the minister; and knelt down again and said, "Lord, tell the minister what to say." At another time he said he had forgotten to pray for a particular friend, and went immediately back into his little room and prayed for her.

I always tried to make the subject of death pleasant to him, and to remove from his mind all dread, by directing his thoughts beyond. I took him and his little sister at one time to see the graves around Trinity Church. He gazed upon the beautiful green grass and trees, and asked many questions. I shall never forget his pleasant smile and tone of voice, when, as we came away, he turned his fine black eye upon me and said, "Mother, I won't be afraid to die." God grant it, precious one; was the inward response of my heart.

He united a very affectionate disposition with uncommon energy and activity of character. He would frequently come and throw his little arms around my neck, and say, "I love you mamma — I love father, too," and then bound away to engage in some active sport. I longed to hear it spontaneously from his own lips, that he loved the Savior, feeling that if he loved him more, he would not love me less. One day he jumped upon my lap fondly, and as I clasped him in my arms, I said, "Who does Willy love?" — expecting to hear him say mother; but his answer was, "I love the Savior." This was just what my heart had desired. "And why does Willy love the Savior?" I asked. "Be-

cause he died," was the reply. "Why did he die?" "For our sins." "How much do you love him?" "With all my heart." O, how sweetly did these infantile replies fall upon my ear. I blessed God for the evidence that he was being taught of the Spirit.

At one time he heard some boys in the street use improper language. He repeated it without being conscious of its meaning. I told him that was very wrong, children that talked so grieved the Savior, and could not go to Heaven, because they were not pure in heart. Afterwards, on seeing the same boys, he remarked, "those boys naughty boys, they make the Savior feel bad." He frequently after ~~this~~, prayed that he might be *pure in heart*. For several months ~~past~~ he has manifested great tenderness of conscience, and would generally, after having been guilty of some little act of disobedience, confess it with tears, and say, "I am sorry I did so, will you forgive me? I won't do so any more at all. I have made the Savior feel bad, and I am so sorry." He would not be content until fully assured of forgiveness, and restored to favor. Then he would exhibit a sweetly subdued and submissive spirit. One instance of determined obstinacy is all I recollect, and that was of short duration. He struck his little sister in a passion, and on being requested to tell her he was sorry, and ask her to forgive him, he refused positively. I expostulated with him, but to no effect. I then told him he had better go and sit alone until he felt right, for he was grieving the Savior and grieving his mother, and making himself very unhappy. He sat alone about five minutes, and then called to me, "mother I am good now." I conversed with him and found him truly penitent. He went to his little sister, and kissing her, told her he was sorry, and asked her forgiveness. He then made all the reparation in his power by giving her all his playthings. One night the past summer, while we were in the country, I was lying awake until a late hour, thinking of the precious love of Jesus, and enjoying in a peculiar manner the comforts of his love, when the dear child awoke, and nestling closer to my side, said, "mamma, I want to pray;" I taught him a little prayer, when he closed his eyes and quietly fell asleep. It seemed as if the overshadowing presence of the Holy One was all around, and God was not only blessing the mother, but the dear child also.

And now I come to the time when this precious lamb was gathered with the Savior's arms, and carried in his bosom. On the 29th of November he was left, as usual, to take his nap, while his little sister went with us to dinner. We had not been gone many minutes, before he came into the dining room very badly

burned. O, what a sight was that for a mother's heart! He held up his dear little hands, which were burned in a most shocking manner, in an imploring attitude. Had I not looked up for help, I could not have been sustained in that awful moment. O how abundantly were the promises fulfilled to his agonized parents, in this hour of their need. "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee." The dear child never groaned or cried, although his sufferings must have been intense. He was taken up stairs and placed in his mother's arms; he then said, "I have done wrong, will you forgive me?" His wounds were immediately dressed, but he survived only about twelve hours. All was done that could be done for his relief, but he relapsed gradually into a state of insensibility, and continued so, only asking occasionally for cold water, until he died.

On examining the room, it was found that he had taken the lamp feeder and the nursery lamp from the closet, and carried them to the fire, probably with the intention of filling and lighting the lamp. In some way the flames communicated to his clothes, which were woolen, except his apron. Finding himself on fire, he went back to the bed, climbed up, and rolled himself upon the worsted spread, which extinguished the fire. He probably felt that he had done wrong, because he had so often been cautioned against going to the fire, and thought he would lie still on the bed, as he had been told to do; but his agony was so great that he rose and went to the pitcher of water, and then came down to the dining room. All this time not a cry or groan was heard. The wrong that he had done seemed to rise in his mind above the sufferings he endured, and his first anxiety was to know that he was forgiven. Precious child! it was his last confession, and the last act of forgiveness his parents were called to exercise towards him. He is safely gathered home, and will never have to suffer again for doing wrong.

"This lovely bud, so young, so fair,
Called hence by early doom,
Just came to show how sweet a flower
In Paradise would bloom."

New York, Dec. 6th.

The outward estate may be flourishing, but the soul cannot prosper that takes root in the earth.

A SOLEMN PRAYER.

Nothing is more common than for professors of religion to pray — “Make our hearts meet temples for the Holy Ghost to dwell in.” Do they consider what they pray for? They are asking for holy hearts. No terms could be used which would more fully imply entire holiness. Now, do they expect that their prayer will be answered? Do they expect that the Holy Ghost will actually come and dwell in their hearts *in this life*? If they do not, it is awful mockery to pray thus. If they do expect it, they certainly must calculate that their hearts will be made meet for his reception, by being thoroughly cleansed of sin; for they cannot entertain the horrible idea, that the Holy Ghost would dwell in a heart polluted with indwelling sin. Thus Christians are in the daily practice of praying for pure hearts — for pure hearts in this life too; for it is here that they expect the Spirit to dwell in them — yet they do not believe they shall ever have pure hearts to the day of their death? Must not such prayer be exceedingly offensive to a just and jealous God? Observe, they ask God himself to *make* them meet, and do not believe that He will; nay, hold that it is sinful to believe that He will. Is not this perfectly awful? We would beseech brethren either to give up this prayer, or to give up that unbelief which converts it into a curse on their own heads.— *Oberlin Evangelist*.

DEAL JUSTLY.

We mean this for some of our subscribers!

Who will deny that to deal justly is one of the great essentials of practical religion? The Scriptures and common sense make the matter so plain that the man who denies the principle would be considered a dangerous person. So you will say.

But there is certainly a glaring discrepancy between the opinions and practice of some people—some whom we have considered our people. We will give an illustration. We have had hundreds on hundreds discontinue the Guide, who each owed us one dollar or more, without paying their arrearages? This was a small amount, to be sure, for each individual. It may have been considered a little thing which might pass unnoticed. But how can we forget a *thousand* such delinquents? We feel the injustice. How can we help it? Should we tell these same people that a neighbor owed us a thousand dollars which

we needed, and which he might pay, but would not, they would pity us, and would express a righteous indignation at the cruelty of our neighbor. But do we stand the less in need of sympathy because we lose the thousand dollars by as many different people who might pay, but who do not, on account of covetousness or carelessness? We make these remarks honestly and sincerely. We have nothing contrary to love towards any person in the world. But we feel it due to ourselves and some of our readers, too, that we speak plainly on this subject. For with those who neglect such plain duties, it is not a bare matter of dollars. They cannot consistently expect to enter into the deep things of God while they wilfully neglect the smaller matters of justice and brotherly love. We are aware that these remarks will never reach many of the persons for whom they are designed. But some may be benefitted, and others may reap the fruit of it. At least, we hope it will be a caution to others not to be involved in acts so unlike the perfect pattern, with us or any one else.

The above is all intended for those who have discontinued their paper without paying for it. But we must give a few plain hints to others. We have now over four thousand subscribers. More than one half of them owe for the present volume. This should have been paid last July. Not a few owe for the previous volume also! Brethren, these things ought not so to be. Please ask yourselves, "How is the printer paid? How is the paper paid for? What are the conditions on which I take the Guide?" The cover tells you—one dollar per annum, to be paid in advance. There is no provision for extra pay at the close of the year, as with some other periodicals. We expect our money in good season. You are under no obligation to be a subscriber, but if you do subscribe, you are sacredly bound to be a prompt paymaster. And as a general thing, it is just as easy to forward your money at one time as at another. And we sincerely think the periodical which has been paid for is read with the greater satisfaction. The subscriber's relation to the financial interests of the Guide has become such that he is at liberty to speak freely of the justice and propriety of prompt payments, without subjecting him to the charge of selfishness.

Brethren, put no part of this communication to the account of ill will. It is plain language, to be sure, but written in love. Let us henceforth endeavor to be holy in all manner of transactions.

Your friend,

D. S. KING.

A cheerful resignation to God is the way to obtain a cheerful satisfaction and confidence in God.

A life from the dead ought to be spent in extolling the God of our life.